

FLASH

OF THE UNITED STATES

The Humane Society

CLOSE-UP REPORT

NEW JERSEY OUTLAWS STEEL-JAW, LEGHOLD TRAP!

It took almost two decades of dedicated struggle and hundreds of thousands of dollars, but we finally did it! The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), with the help of our members, other organizations, and local humane groups, succeeded in getting New Jersey to outlaw the steel-jaw, leghold trap! By the fall of 1985, it will be illegal for anyone to manufacture, sell, possess, or use the trap in that state. New Jersey's wildlife will be able to roam the woodlands and bogs free from the threat of trap-caused mutilation or death.

"When I first learned about the trap in 1964," said HSUS Mid-Atlantic Regional Director Nina Austenberg, "I figured that all we had to do was let the public know how horrible it is and the trap would be banned within a year or two. It never dawned on me that it would take almost twenty years. Over the years I've come home time after time defeated and angry. Then, when the moment finally came when it was clear we would win, I was in awe. I am witnessing history; the days of the steel-jaw, leghold trap in New Jersey will soon be over."

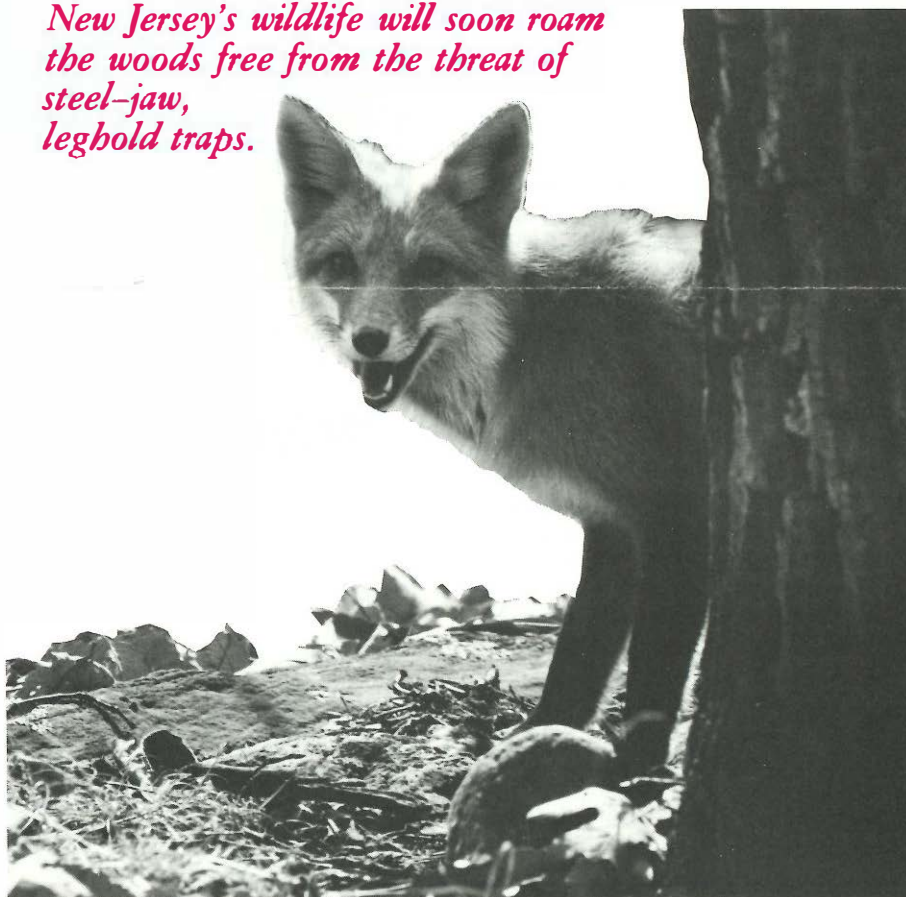
Not to be forgotten are the memories of children comforting mutilated pets that barely survived the ordeal of being caught in the indiscriminate jaws of the trap; of trappers' editorials whining about the unfairness of trapping bills; of angry trappers hearing of county after county outlawing steel-jaw, leghold traps; of one hundred animal welfarists wearing HSUS "Every Fur Coat Hurts" decals as they crowded the state assembly's gallery to hear last minute debates; and of the relief in the gallery as animal advocates realized that the New Jersey battle was finally over.

As monumental as New Jersey's victory is, many struggles lie before us. We are tackling the trappers on the federal level and we plan to intensify our many efforts to help local organizations outlaw the steel-jaw, leghold trap in their own states. We may have more work ahead of us in New Jersey, as well. We can't let down our guard until the new law goes into effect in 1985 because the trappers will probably work to

defeat it in the next year and a half. We cannot doubt that they will try to sabotage this attempt to halt their exploitation of wildlife.

Trappers are concerned that other states will follow New Jersey's shining example and outlaw the steel-jaw, leghold trap. We must confront the trappers with our own solid, well-established force in defense of animals. We can do it!

New Jersey's wildlife will soon roam the woods free from the threat of steel-jaw, leghold traps.



What We're Up Against

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recently commissioned a study of Americans' attitudes toward wildlife and discovered that seventy-eight percent of the public is opposed to the steel-jaw, leghold trap. Why then, in a democracy, is the trap still legal in most of the United States?

U.S. commercial trappers have set up a sophisticated and extensive lobbying cooperative throughout the country. They help each other on state and local levels—and when they tackle federal issues, they band together into monoliths of persuasive rhetoric and misinformation. As more successes such as the one we had in New Jersey back trappers to the wall, they respond with increasingly shrill and preposterous arguments in favor of steel-jaw, leghold traps.

The threat of rabies is the most powerful and frightening of the trappers' arguments, but it's one we *can* refute. Without traps, trappers earnestly insist, diseased animals foaming at the mouth would emerge from the woods to prowl the city streets and bite helpless children. "What chance will your child have against the attack of a rabid animal?" screamed one advertisement fashioned by trappers.

In reality, trappers are not trying to control rabies or other diseases. Indeed, only fourteen percent of the animals caught by trappers are species that public health officials regard as carriers of rabies. The species commonly caught by trappers—muskrat and nutria—seldom succumb to rabies. Additionally, trapping may actually fuel rabies outbreaks. The trapper will set his traps according to the eating and traveling habits of healthy foxes, raccoons, and other animals. Sick animals don't necessarily follow these patterns and are less likely to step into a trap. Thus rabid animals survive while the healthy, and frequently immune, animals are caught and killed. The population of healthy animals would be providing a natural deterrent to the spread of rabies if it were not being eliminated by steel-jaw, leghold traps.

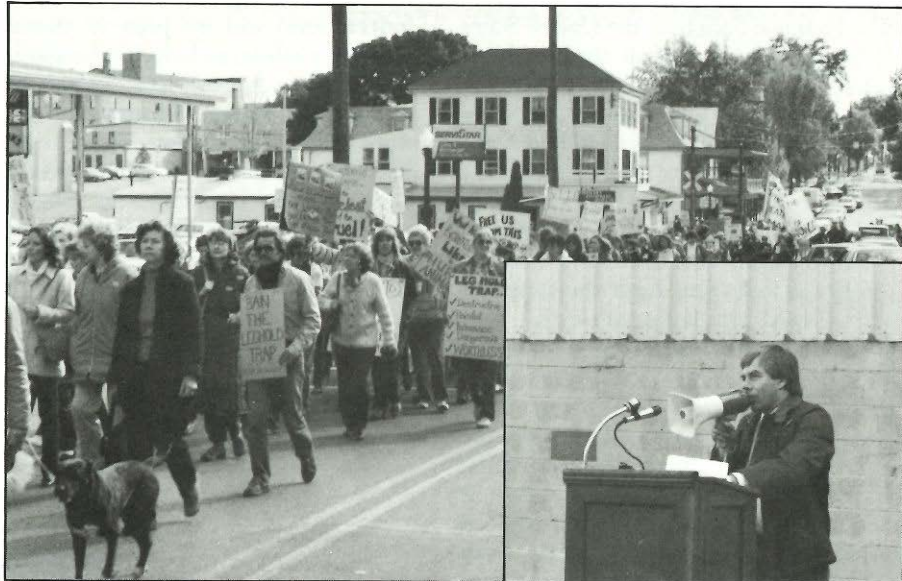
Another emotion-packed issue that trappers continually bring up is that by outlawing the steel-jaw, leghold trap legislators are taking the livelihood away from thousands of citizens. Actually, most trappers trap part-time to

supplement their earnings; the average yearly income from trapping is less than \$500 per person! Much of the trapping in the United States is purely recreational. Nothing can justify the suffering caused by these instruments of pain.

Trappers are getting substantial lobbying assistance from the Woodstream Corporation, the world's largest manufacturer of steel-jaw, leghold traps. Although it loses money on the sale of these traps, Woodstream pours thousands of dollars into the effort to keep the trap legal. Where does it get its money? Partly from the sale of Havahart traps! These are cage traps used by scientists,

animal shelters, and humane individuals who want to catch and transport certain animals safely! Animal-control officers and other humane buyers of Havahart traps are inadvertently subsidizing trappers' lobbying efforts to keep the cruel steel-jaw, leghold trap legal!

The HSUS and other animal-welfare groups are facing virulent opposition on this steel-jaw, leghold trap issue. Much of the trapping lobby's resources are devoted to misleading the public in order to keep the steel-jaw, leghold trap legal. The HSUS and local activists must, in turn, use their energies to win an honest battle for the animals!



Approximately 500 demonstrators against the steel-jaw, leghold trap marched down Main Street in Lititz, Pa., Woodstream's headquarters. HSUS Vice President for Wildlife and the Environment John Grandy (right) spoke to the crowd condemning the trap.

What The HSUS Is Doing

In our work to defeat the trappers in their concerted efforts to keep the steel-jaw, leghold trap legal in the United States, The HSUS is

- alerting animal shelters throughout the country to avoid buying the Havahart cage trap, manufactured by the Woodstream Corporation
- pressuring Congress to hold hearings on H.R. 1797, the bill which would outlaw the use of the steel-jaw, leghold trap

- cosponsoring the Mobilization For Animals rally to ban the use of the steel-jaw, leghold traps on April 7, 1984, in Washington, D.C.

- strongly urging Interior Secretary William P. Clark to dismiss Assistant Secretary G. Ray Arnett

- continuing our educational campaign throughout the United States on the cruelties of trapping

- initiating and supporting state and local efforts to ban the steel-jaw, leghold trap.

The HSUS Calls for Arnett's Dismissal

A top Department of the Interior official, who should be leading the defense of this nation's wildlife, is no friend to the animals. In the scant three years that he has been Assistant Secretary, G. Ray Arnett has

- started or expanded trapping and/or hunting programs on numerous national wildlife refuges
- supported the experimental use of the deadly poison 1080 and other cruel and inefficient forms of predator control. A predator-control device illegally placed by the government was recently implicated in killing one of the few remaining California condors

- consistently frustrated attempts to publicize and halt the deaths of two to three million wild birds each year due to poisoning from swallowing lead shotgun pellets. One of the birds killed this year was a critically endangered whooping crane, another was a bald eagle.

Incredibly, Mr. Arnett has even proposed delaying for almost a year the ban on illegal trapping in eleven units of the national park system. This move, in direct opposition to overwhelming public support of the ban, is designed to buy trappers and their hiring lobbyists and lawyers time to push through Congress legislation that would permanently authorize trapping in these areas.

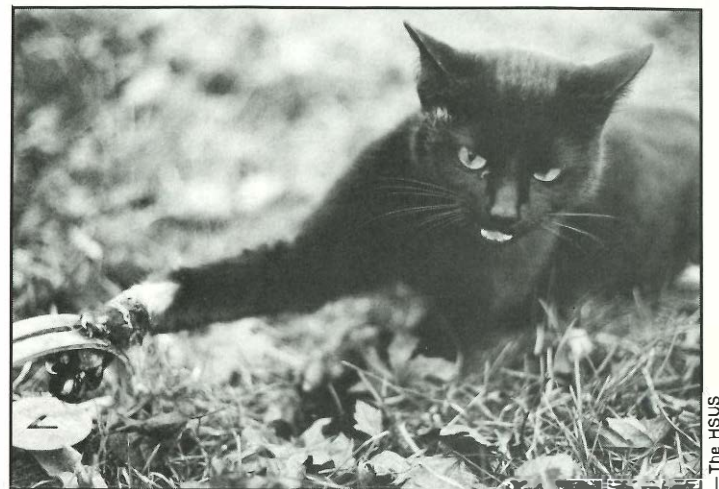
In addition to these abuses of his duty as protector of the country's wildlife, Mr. Arnett's record shows that the American public cannot reasonably expect him to show any respect to the animals in his charge. His affiliation with hunters and trappers reaches deep into his history. He was director of the hunter- and trapper-controlled California Department of Fish and Game and chairman of the Wildlife Legislative Fund of America, a powerful hunting and trapping lobby group.

With this background, he predictably uses his influence to protect the interests of hunters and trappers, at the expense of U.S. wildlife and the integrity of the national refuges and parks.

In a strongly worded letter to Interior Secretary William P. Clark, HSUS President John A. Hoyt outlined Arnett's negative influences on the nation's wilderness and the animals that live there. He concluded by requesting Mr. Arnett's dismissal:

"We urge you to examine the facts and take prompt action to restore integrity to the management of the Parks and Wildlife branch of the Interior Department," wrote Mr. Hoyt. "With regret, we have reached the inescapable conclusion that necessary corrective action must begin with the dismissal of the current Assistant Secretary, Mr. G. Ray Arnett. We urge you to take such action promptly."

This cat, caught in an illegally set trap within city limits, did not survive. Found with a shredded paw and in great pain, it had to be euthanatized.



Did You Know?

In Arizona, a seventeen-year-old boy was arrested by a game warden for administering first aid to a fox whose leg was mangled in a trap. Trapping regulations in Arizona and some other states specifically prohibit a citizen from tending to the injuries of an animal caught in the grip of a steel-jaw, leghold trap.

In Pennsylvania, a game warden ordered an elderly woman to reimburse a trapper for a steel-jaw, leghold trap that had been set in her yard without her consent. The woman had removed the trap because it was a hazard to her pet cats. In many states, trappers may set steel-jaw, leghold traps on private property without the knowledge or permission of the landowner.

No state requires trappers to obtain veterinary treatment for nontarget animals, such as eagles or pets, that are injured in their traps.

Game departments routinely ignore state anti-cruelty statutes when writing trapping regulations. They permit trappers to bludgeon animals to death even though such acts clearly violate anti-cruelty laws.

Posting property against trapping may not prevent steel-jaw, leghold traps from being set. Signs must be posted in a legally prescribed manner, and the rules are designed to make it inconvenient for landowners to close their property to trapping.

H.R. 1797 Would Prohibit the Steel-Jaw, Leghold Trap Nationwide

In addition to tackling the steel-jaw, leghold trap in New Jersey and helping local organizations fight for similar wins in their own states, The HSUS is pressuring Congress to pass legislation that would ban the trap throughout the nation. Specifically, H.R. 1797, introduced by Rep. Clarence D. Long (D-MD) on March 2, 1983, bans the receipt, purchase, acquisition, or use of the steel-jaw, leghold trap in the United

States. The bill also prohibits the importation from other countries of pelts or other parts of animals that have been caught in the steel-jaw, leghold trap.

Since it was introduced, 106 representatives have signed on as cosponsors of H.R. 1797. Pressure from trappers, however, influenced some representatives to remove their names from the bill. Although no set number of cosponsors is required before hearings on a bill can be held, this bill needs all the cosponsors it can get. Representative Henry Waxman, chairman of the House Subcommittee on Health and the Environment,

is greatly influenced by an impressive number of cosponsors. He, alone, can decide to hold hearings on H.R. 1797. Without hearings, the bill will never go any further.

The HSUS is working with a coalition of other animal-welfare groups and individuals to demonstrate public support of H.R. 1797 and bring the bill up for hearings and a vote. We are preparing fact sheets on the bill and the trapping issue, and we are urging our members to write to Representative Henry Waxman and their own representative in favor of the bill and the necessary hearings.



Traps set on dirt banks cause the victim, like this raccoon, to fall over the edge and dangle by its trapped limb. The animal is likely to hemorrhage and die before the trapper claims the body.

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WHAT YOU CAN DO

Please work with us in outlawing the steel-jaw, leghold trap. We can do it, but we must have your help. To work against the steel-jaw, leghold trap, please

- Write to

The Honorable William P. Clark
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

and ask him to dismiss G. Ray Arnett as Assistant Secretary of the Interior. Use this *Close-Up Report* for information to back up your argument.

- Urge your congressman to cosponsor H.R. 1797, the bill that outlaws the steel-jaw, leghold trap. Your letter will reach your congressman at the following address:

The Honorable (Congressman's name)
The House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

- Also urge Representative Henry A. Waxman to hold hearings on H.R. 1797, the bill to prohibit the steel-jaw, leghold trap:

The Honorable Henry A. Waxman
Chairman
Subcommittee on Health and the Environment
512 HOB Annex 1
Washington, D.C. 20515

- Write to The HSUS for our model bill to outlaw the steel-jaw trap in your state, a sample form to record pets and other nontarget animals victimized by the trap in your area, and a list of alternative humane-trap manufacturers.

- Finally, please support The HSUS in our work to protect wildlife, pets, and other animals from the painful mutilations and exploitation that they suffer from steel-jaw, leghold traps. Your tax-deductible contribution will help us conduct educational, legal, and legislative programs that will protect all animals from painful and untimely deaths. Please send your contribution in the enclosed postage-paid envelope today. (With a contribution of \$10.00 or more, you will receive an "Every Fur Coat Hurts" decal.)



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